

TITLE

SYSTEM FOR SECURITY CHECKING OR TRANSPORT OF PERSONS BY AN ELEVATOR INSTALLATION AND A METHOD FOR OPERATING THIS SYSTEM

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a system for safety checking or transport of persons by an elevator installation and to a method for operating this system.

Systems for security checking of persons are known. For example, such systems
10 control the entrance/exit of persons to/from buildings, floors, rooms, etc.

Intelligent systems for transporting persons enable transport, which is controlled by identification, of persons in transport means. The specification of European patent EP 0 699 617 shows a device for controlling an elevator installation in which the elevator installation is controlled by a person through an identification code. In that case, a
15 recognition device recognizes the identification code and passes it on as a control signal to a processing unit. This unit reads the control signal and allocates thereto a predefined, desired travel destination. The bearer of the identification code is thus identified and a travel destination is assigned to him or her. The processing unit transmits a corresponding control signal to the elevator installation, which then automatically
20 conveys the person to the travel destination.

It has now proved to be a disadvantage that unauthorized persons can use the identification code in order to gain access to buildings, floors, rooms, etc., and in order to be able to be transported by the elevator installation.

According to the PCT specification WO 01/25128 a person carries a mobile input
25 device which undertakes a authentication by speech recognition and checks whether the person is who he or she purports to be. The person also inputs his or her travel destination by way of the mobile input device, which passes on the travel destination as a control signal to a processing unit, which then communicates a corresponding control signal to the elevator installation which automatically transports the person to the travel
30 destination. The relative awkwardness of this input device, which also necessitates an associated electrical current supply, is disadvantageous.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is the object of the present invention to provide a system for security checking or transporting persons by an elevator installation and a method of operating this system, wherein the reliability of the identification is increased in simple mode and manner with,
5 at the same time, a more user-friendly possibility of input of a travel destination.

The present invention fulfils the object in that a person, who is to be transported by an elevator installation, is authenticated by detection of at least one authentication signal by at least one mobile authentication device. For this purpose an authentication signal is detected from the person and checked with at least one person reference. If the
10 authentication signal and person reference correspond, at least one identification code is provided. The identification code is detected by a stationary recognition device. A predefined travel destination or a travel destination input at the recognition device by the person is assigned to the identification code.

Advantageously, the mobile authentication device is similar in size and weight to
15 a credit card and the person carries it with them and can use it at any time simply and quickly. For example, a person takes an authentication device, which is similar to a card, with a fingerprint sensor near the elevator installation in his or her hand and an authentication of the person and a destination call take place already. In addition, the use of this authentication device by a single person is very hygienic. Advantageously, the
20 mobile authentication device does not require an own energy source, but is supplied with electrical current by at least one external energy source, which makes this authentication device simple to use and maintain and economic to provide.

A biometric signal is used as the authentication signal. Advantageously, a fingerprint, or a hand geometry, or a facial profile, or an iris pattern, or a retinal scan, or a
25 thermogram, or a smell, or a voice, or a signature, or pressing a button is used as authentication signal.

Advantageously, the stationary recognition device comprises at least one input means for input of the travel destination, which can be a known and proven control and display panel with buttons or a touch screen. This has the advantage that the mobile
30 authentication device does not have to contain such input means and can be constructed to be correspondingly small and simple.

Advantageously, the identification code is checked with a user reference in order to establish whether the person is also a registered user of the elevator installation. In this identification it is checked whether at least one user reference exists for the detected identification code.

5 Advantageously, in the case of successful association of identification code and user reference at least one control signal is transmitted to the elevator installation in order to transport the person to the travel destination. In the case of an unsuccessful authentication or in the case of an unsuccessful identification, at least one alarm signal is transmitted in order to lock the person in the elevator car or to deny the person access to
10 the travel destination.

Advantageously, in addition to authentication and identification there is carried out an access control in which it is established whether the person also has authorized access to the travel destination. Advantageously, an access authorization to the travel destination is checked with at least one access authorization. The travel destination of
15 the person is advantageously compared with a list of travel destinations of the access authorization. In the case of presence of access authorization to the travel destination, at least one control signal is communicated to the elevator installation in order to transport the person to the travel destination. In the case of unsuccessful access check, at least one alarm signal is communicated in order to lock the person in the elevator car or to deny
20 the person access to the travel destination.

The present invention is suitable for exclusive, as also for alternative or supplementary, identification of persons in elevator installations. For example, for this purpose mobile authentication devices carried by persons are supplemented by further stationary authentication devices near the elevator installation. Such a need exists, for
25 example, in zones with high security requirements, such as banks, military zones of protection, etc.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The above, as well as other advantages of the present invention, will become
30 readily apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description of a preferred embodiment when considered in the light of the accompanying drawings in which:

Fig. 1 is a schematic part block and part flow diagram of a first embodiment of an apparatus and a method in accordance with the present invention; and

Fig. 2 is a schematic part block and part flow diagram of a second embodiment of an apparatus and a method in accordance with the present invention.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In these basic illustrations, Figs. 1 and 2, a person **P** is transported by an elevator installation **A**. Authenticatable goods can also be transported instead of a person. The elevator installation **A** can be any elevator installation, which is installed inside or
10 outside a building, with an elevator car, a drive and an elevator control **AS**. A drive with an elevator car fastened to a conveying cable and a counterweight fastened to the conveying cable are schematically illustrated. All known and proven elevator installations can be used. For example, hydraulic elevator installations or also such in which the drive is fastened directly to the car, and naturally also escalators, can be used.

15 An authentication device **F** detects at least one authentication signal **P0** of the person **P**, checks the authentication signal **P0** and provides an identification code **P2**. The following biometric methods of authentications are preferably used:

Fingerprint - A fingerprint of the person **P** is detected, for example scanned. Preferably, the person **P** places a finger on a surface of the authentication device **F**, where
20 a fingerprint is photographed by a camera as a grey tone image. The grey tones are preferably converted to binary or the line widths reduced. Details are marked.

Hand geometry - Dimensions of a hand of the person **P** are detected. The person **P** preferably places at least a part of his or her hand on a surface of the authentication device **F**, where a three-dimensional silhouette of the hand is photographed by a camera.
25 Protrusions preferably assist in positioning the hand.

Facial profile - A facial profile of the person **P** can be detected as a three-dimensional model or as a two-dimensional pattern or as an infrared image as well as a combination of these methods. In addition, black-and-white images or color images can be detected. The detection angle can vary, thus profile images or frontal images or
30 general perspectives can be detected. In terms of time, a static image or an image sequence can be detected. The authentication device **F** photographs at least a part of the facial profile of the person **P** by a camera.

Iris profile- A texture of the iris of the person **P** is detected. Preferably, the person **P** stands at a spacing of a few decimeters distance in front of the authentication device **F** and looks into a camera, which camera photographs the iris texture. This photograph is digitized to form an iris code. The iris is preferably divided into annular
5 regions and characteristic features are marked.

Retinal scan - A structure of the veins of the retina of the person **P** is detected, for example scanned. The person **P** preferably stands at a few decimeters distance in front of the authentication device **F** and looks into a camera, which camera photographs the structure of the veins of the retina. For this purpose the eye is preferably irradiated with
10 infrared light. The photoreceptive structures of the eye reflect the infrared light, which reflection is photographed. This photograph is digitized to form a retina code and characteristic features are marked.

Thermogram - Thermal radiation of the person **P** is detected. Preferably, a thermal camera of the authentication device **F** records a facial or whole body
15 thermogram.

Smell - A smell of the person **P** is detected by a smell sensor of the authentication device **F**.

Voice - Vocal pitch or voice break or accents or speech impediments of the person **P** is or is or are detected. For that purpose the person **P** speaks into a microphone
20 of the authentication device **F** and one or more phrases are recorded.

Signature - A signature of the person **P** is detected, for example scanned. The person **P** writes a signature on a surface of the authentication device **F**, which signature is photographed by a camera. Preferably, strokes or dynamics or sounds of writing of the signature are marked or determined.

25 Pressing a button - The mode and manner how buttons of a keyboard are pressed by the person **P** are detected. Preferably, the authentication device **F** ascertains, by sensors, the force or dynamics of the pressing of the button.

Advantageously the authentication device **F** comprises at least one sensor **S** for detecting the authentication signal **P0**, at least one data store **B1** for filing a person
30 reference **P1**, at least one data store for storing a recognition software, as well as at least one computer unit for execution of the recognition software. The sensor **S** is, for example, a camera for detecting a fingerprint, or a hand geometry, or a facial profile, or

an iris profile, or a retinal scan, or a signature. The sensor **S** is, for example, a thermal camera for detecting a thermogram. The sensor **S** is, for example, a smell sensor for detecting a smell. The sensor **S** is, for example, a microphone for detecting a voice. The sensor **S** is, for example, a button for detecting the pressing of the button. At least one of
5 the authentication signal **P0** is advantageously digitized and filed in at least one preceding method step as the person reference **P1**. With the recognition software there takes place an authentication by comparison of the detected authentication signal **P0** with the filed person reference **P1**. For example, specific characteristic features of the authentication signal **P0** and the person reference **P1** are compared with one another.
10 This is carried out by a standard software which is available to an expert in the field of elevators.

The authentication signal **P0** is assignable more or less uniquely to the person **P** or the acceptance on the part of the user to be subjected to an authentication is high to a greater or lesser extent. Thus, the iris pattern can be assigned quite uniquely to a person,
15 but acceptance of an iris pattern authentication is low.

In a preferred form of embodiment at least two authentication signals **P0** are detected from the person **P** and checked. Especially in high-security systems - thus in security-conscientious buildings such as banks, military facilities, etc. - several authentication signals **P0** are detected from the person **P** and evaluated. For example, a
20 fingerprint and an iris pattern of the person **P** are detected. The uniqueness of the authentication is thereby strongly increased.

Advantageously the authentication takes place before entering the elevator car. Advantageously the authentication device **F** is used in the immediate vicinity of the elevator installation **A**. Advantageously the authentication device **F** and a recognition
25 device **E** of the elevator installation **A** comprise a transmitting and receiving unit. For example, the authentication device **F** comprises a transponder which transmits or receives codes by radio signals. For this purpose, typical radio frequencies are 900 MHz to 6 GHz. For example, the authentication device **F** automatically receives at least one recognition signal from the recognition device **E** as soon as the receiving unit of the
30 authentication device **F** is disposed at a spacing of a few decimeters from the transmitting unit of the recognition device **E**. With knowledge of the present invention, the expert can obviously also use other transmitting and receiving units and other radio frequencies.

The authentication device **F** is mobile, i.e. the person **P** carries it in size and weight similarly to a credit card and can use it at any time simply and quickly. The use of the authentication device **F** by a single person is very hygienic. In a first advantageous form of embodiment the authentication device **F** does not need an energy source, but uses
5 an external energy source for an electrical current supply. For example, the authentication device **F** is supplied with current by way of an electromagnetic field. This can take place by radio waves via the recognition device **E** as soon as the authentication device **F** is disposed at a spacing of a few decimeters from the recognition device **E**. In a further advantageous form of embodiment the authentication device **F** is autonomous in
10 terms of energy, i.e. it has an own electrical current supply like a battery, an accumulator, a fuel cell, etc.

Advantageously, the authentication device **F** or the recognition device **E** comprises at least one output means for the output of an acoustic or optical or mechanical demand signal. For example, an acoustic demand signal in the form of a tone sequence is
15 used, for example an optical demand signal in the form of a light is used, or for example a mechanical demand signal in the form of a vibration is used. Obviously, demand signals can also be combined with one another and varied.

Advantageously the person **P** has a predetermined time window in order to undertake the authentication as well as the identification. For example, the
20 authentication by the sensor **S** and the recognition software of the authentication device **F** lasts exactly 15 seconds. Through setting a time window of 60 seconds the person **P** has sufficient time to also actually undertake this authentication, i.e. to bring the authentication device **F** into position, to detect an authentication signal, to compare the detected authentication signal with the filed person reference **P1** and to transmit the
25 result to the recognition device **E**. Obviously, the authentication of the person can also be less than 15 seconds depending on the respective sensor which is used, for example less than 5 seconds, for example less than 1 second.

The result of the authentication is either positive or negative. In the case of positive authentication, i.e. on correspondence of the authentication signal **P0** and the
30 person reference **P1**, the output software provides at least one positive authentication signal **P1+**. In the case of negative authentication, i.e. in the case of non-correspondence of the authentication signal **P0** and the person reference **P1**, the output software provides

at least one alarm signal **P13**. Advantageously, the identification code **P2** is set up and filed in at least one preceding method step. For example, the identification code **P2** is a numerical sequence or a numeral and letter sequence.

Basically, the identification code **P2** filed in the authentication device **F**, or the
5 alarm signal **P13** of the authentication device **F**, or the authentication code **P2** known to the person **P** is transmitted. For the first case, the authentication device **F** advantageously comprises at least one second data store **B2** for filing the identification code **P2**, at least one data store for storing an output software as well as at least one computing unit for executing the output software. The output software checks the
10 presence of the positive authentication signal **P1+** and thereupon provides the filed identification code **P2**.

The transmission of the identification code **P2** or of the alarm signal **P13** to the recognition device **E** can take place in numerous ways:

- Thus, it is possible that the authentication device **F** comprises a transmitting and
15 receiving unit and communicates the identification code **P2** filed in the authentication device **F** or the alarm signal **P13** of the authentication device **F** by radio to the recognition device **E**.

- For example, it is also possible that the person **P** is provided acoustically or optically or mechanically with the identification code **P2** or the alarm signal **P13** from
20 the authentication device **F** with an output means and that the person **P** inputs the identification code **P2** at the input means of the recognition device **E**.

- Alternatively thereto it is possible that the person **P** receives, from the authentication device **F** or the recognition device **E** with an output means, an acoustic or optical demand signal for entry at the recognition device **E** of the identification code **P2**
25 known to the person **P**.

- It is also possible that the person **P** receives, from the authentication device **F** or the recognition device **E** with an output means, an acoustic or optical demand signal for entry, by way of an input means of the authentication device **F**, of the identification code **P2** known to the person **P**.

30 The possibilities of transmission can take place within the time window set by the recognition device **E**. However, it is also possible that the authentication device **F** transmits to the recognition device **E** by radio at least one transmission signal in order to

inform the recognition device **E** about the imminent transmission or in order to set the recognition device **E** a time window for transmission of the identification code **P2**. Finally, it is possible that the authentication device **F** sends to the recognition device **E** the positive authentication signal **P1+** or the alarm signal **P13** as a transmission signal.

5 The transmission possibilities can be combined and varied. For example, it is possible that the person inputs the identification code **P2** by way of an input means of the authentication device **F** and the authentication device **F** transmits this identification code **P2** by the transmitting and receiving unit via radio to the recognition device **E**. For example, it is possible to use acoustic and/or optical and/or mechanical input means of
10 the authentication device **F** or the recognition device **E**. An acoustic input means is, for example, a microphone, an optical input means is, for example, a screen (touchscreen) and a mechanical input means is, for example, a keyboard.

With knowledge of the present invention the expert can realize numerous variations of the authentication device **F**, the recognition device **E** or a checking device
15 **C**. For example, the authentication device **F** can be a component of an every-day portable apparatus for the person, such as a mobile telephone, a wristwatch, a portable computer (laptop, handheld, etc.), a camera, a photographic appliance, a portable radio, a music reproducing appliance (MP3 player, CD player, etc.), etc. In addition, the authentication device **F** can also be a component of several such appliances. Finally, the
20 authentication device **F** can communicate by way of any radio networks with the recognition device **E** or also directly with the checking device **C**. The components of the authentication device **F**, the recognition device **E** and also the checking device **C** are commercially available and inexpensive.

The recognition device **E** is advantageously mounted in stationary position at an
25 entrance to the elevator installation **A**. Advantageously, the recognition device **E** is a component of a control and display panel of the elevator installation **A**. Advantageously, the control and display panel is mounted near a floor door of the elevator installation **A**. In the form of embodiment of the invention according to Fig. 1, a travel destination **P3** of the person **P** is predefined and filed in at least one third data store **B3** of the checking
30 device **C**. In the form of embodiment of the invention according to Fig. 2, the person **P** inputs the travel destination **P3** by way of an input means of the recognition device **E**.

The identification code **P2** and/or the travel destination **P3** is or are transmitted by the recognition device **E** to the checking device **C**. Advantageously, the recognition device **E** and the checking device **C** communicate with one another by cable or radio. In that case, the recognition device **E** and the checking device **C** can form a single system.

5 For example, a building comprises floors (not shown) and the elevator installation **A** with three elevators (only one is shown) arranged adjacent to one another. At least one of the recognition device **E** per floor is placed near the entrances (not shown) to the elevators. For example, each recognition device **E** is an insert which is pushable into a housing (not shown) of a control and display panel (not shown). For example, each control and
10 display panel has at least one bus insert (not shown). These bus inserts are connected to a bus system (not shown), such as an LON bus. The recognition devices **E** communicate with one another by way of the bus system. For example, the checking device **C** is also an insert and pushed into one of the control and display panels. In addition, the checking device **E** communicates by way of the bus system with the recognition devices **E**.

15 The checking device **C** checks the association with at least one filed user reference **P4** with the identification code **P2** of the person **P** and checks the presence of at least one filed access authorization **P5** to the travel destination **P3** of the person **P**. For that purpose it comprises at least one fourth data store **B4** for filing the at least one user reference **P4**, at least one fifth data store **B5** for filing at least one access authorization
20 **P5**, at least one data store for storing a checking software and at least one computer unit for executing the checking software. The checking device **C** can be a central remote server. The user reference **P4** or the access authorization **P5** is set up and filed in at least one preceding method step. For example, the user reference **P4** is a numerical sequence or a numerical and letter sequence. For example, the access authorization **P5** consists of
25 a list with travel destinations for which the person **P** is authorized with respect to access.

The checking software checks whether the user reference **P4** is filed for the detected identification code **P2**. For example, specific characteristic features of the identification code **P2** and the user reference **P4** are associated with one another. This is carried out by standard software which is available to an expert in the field of elevators.

30 The result of the identification is either positive or negative. In the case of positive identification, i.e. in the case of association of the identification code **P2** and the user reference **P4**, the checking device **C** provides at least one positive identification

signal **P4+**. In the case of negative identification, i.e. in the case of non-association of the identification code **P2** and the user reference **P4**, the checking software provides at least one alarm signal **P13**.

The forms of embodiment, by way of example, of the present invention according to Figs. 1 and 2 differ from one another insofar as in the first embodiment of the present invention according to Fig. 1, in the case of presence of the positive identification signal **P4+**, the predefined travel destination **P3** is provided in the checking device **C**, whereas in the second embodiment of the present invention according to Fig. 2, the travel destination **P3** is provided at the recognition device **E**. For example, the monitoring software checks the presence of the positive identification signal **P4+** and thereupon provides the filed, predefined travel destination.

The checking software now checks whether the person **P** is authorized to be transported to the travel destination **P3** or to gain access to the travel destination **P3**. For example, the checking software carries out a comparison whether the travel destination **P3** is listed on the list of travel destinations of the access authorization **P5**. This is carried out by a standard software which is available to an expert in the field of elevators.

In the case of positive checking of the access authorization **B5**, the checking device **C** transmits the at least one control signal **P6** to the elevator control **AS** of the elevator installation **A** in order to transport the person **P** to the travel destination **P3**. In the case of negative checking of the access authorization, the checking device **C** transmits the at least one alarm signal **P13**.

In the case of presence of the alarm signal **P13**, different procedures can be carried out. For example, none of the floor doors to the elevator installation **A** is opened for the person **P**. Independently thereof, a security service can be warned. It is also possible to give the person **P** access to an elevator car and then, for example, to close the elevator door and keep it locked until the security service is on site and undertakes a further checking of the access authorization **B5** of the person **P**. For example, the elevator car is temporarily stopped or moved to a secure and discrete floor, for example a basement floor, where the person **P** is received by the security service. With knowledge of the present invention, the expert has numerous possibilities of variation. For example, the elevator control **AS** in the case of the presence of the alarm signal **P13** can grant the person **P** access to an elevator car, close the elevator door, move the elevator car to a

secure, discrete floor and then simulate an elevator breakdown so that the person **P** does not have any suspicion until the security service is on site for further checking of the access authorization **B5** of the person **P**.

In accordance with the provisions of the patent statutes, the present invention has
5 been described in what is considered to represent its preferred embodiment. However, it should be noted that the invention can be practiced otherwise than as specifically illustrated and described without departing from its spirit or scope.